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A REPLY

TO

PROF. WILLIAM PEPPER'S

INSULT TO

THE HOMOEOPATHIC SCHOOL OF MEDICINE,

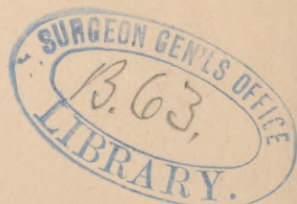
IN HIS

OPENING ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNA., OCTOBER 1, 1877.

By ADOLPH LIPPE, M.D.

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THE HEALING ART.

A HIGHER MEDICAL EDUCATION.

A REPLY TO PROF. WILLIAM PEPPER, M.D.

BY ADOLPH LIPPE, M.D.

DR. WILLIAM PEPPER opened the medical course at the University of Pennsylvania on the 1st of October, 1877, with a paper on "Higher Medical Education the True Interest of the Public and the Profession." Dr. Pepper laments over the troubles which afflict the medical profession, and which have been steadily progressing and increasing for at least fifty years. He advances his opinion as an individual in regard to the cause of this troubled state of affairs in the following manner: "Its ranks are overstocked to an unparalleled extent; there is, I believe, no other business in which so small a proportion of those engaged earn a living; it finds successful rivals among the practitioners of such exclusive schools as homœopathy, eclecticism and the like, which, by the concurrent voices of all intelligent communities, no less than by the verdict of scientific investigation, have been declared to be unworthy of confidence and incapable of endurance."

Comments. First of all we say to Dr. Pepper, "*Gratias!*" He really acknowledges that the homœopathic school of medicine is a *successful rival* of the school to which he belongs and for which he speaks. We, nevertheless, protest against the liberty he takes in placing the homœopathic school in the same classification with the eclectic. These two schools (if eclecticism is a school, which of course we shall not attempt to argue here) have nothing in common. Homœopathy, as *the healing art*, was introduced by Samuel Hahnemann, a man of high attainments, who was respected by all medical men as a ripe scholar, and was only discarded because it did not suit

a preferred class to become students again. Eclecticism is an outgrowth of the allopathic school, and is, what its name fully indicates, a school of expediency, without a single principle to guide its practice.

Dr. Pepper develops a strange logic. He first acknowledges that homœopathy is a successful rival (of *his* school), and in the same breath says that they (homœopathy and eclecticism), "by the concurrent voices of all intelligent communities, no less than by the verdict of scientific investigation, have been declared to be unworthy of confidence and incapable of endurance."

If the intelligent communities have declared them to be unworthy of confidence, how can they possibly continue to be "successful rivals?" As to his reference to the same verdict resulting from "scientific investigation," the doctor seems to be entirely off the logical track. What does he mean by scientific investigation? As he puts it, it is an empty phrase. A scientific investigation of homœopathy is a twofold process. It implies, first, a full knowledge of the principles governing the homœopathic healing art, *i. e.*, the *science of homœopathy*, and second, the art of applying these principles for the cure of the sick. Supplied with this knowledge the investigation can be fairly made; and it so happens that just such investigations, made honestly, have supplied the homœopathic school with many of its best men. It is not possible to judge of a system of medicine without a previous knowledge of it. Honestly and earnestly inquiring medical men, as well as intelligent communities, are governed in their verdict by the actual results as they find them. If, as Dr. Pepper says, the homœopathists are *successful* rivals, then the verdict of intelligent communities and also of scientific investigation must, *logically*, be in their favor. Or does Dr. Pepper take it upon himself to say that communities and investigators finding a verdict in favor of homœopathy, are neither intelligent nor scientific? Dr. Pepper evidently has created this dilemma for his own personal benefit. If he is a consistent man, why does he not, in the name of the University of Pennsylvania, petition the legislatures of all the States of the Union to pass an act by which the practice of homœopathy shall be forbidden and made a criminal offence, giving as a reason for his action, his desire to get rid of a successful rival. That would be just the thing. The intelligent communities, however, have given quite a different verdict. Even as early as 1836, a charter was granted by the legislature of Pennsylvania,

establishing a homœopathic college at Allentown; and an intelligent people have, from time to time, granted other charters for homœopathic colleges and hospitals. A generous and intelligent people have granted to educated physicians of *all schools* the same rights, privileges and immunities. They all enjoy the same legal status; and the same generous, intelligent people, by these very acts, have declared all schools equally worthy of confidence. And why was it that homœopathists had to seek special charters? It was on account of the intolerable illiberality of the existing old medical schools, intolerable because these schools refused to acknowledge the will of the people. While the people through their legislative bodies had bestowed "*equal rights*" on all, the older schools defied the will of the people, and refused these equal rights to the homœopathists.

I have now in my possession documentary evidence to this effect. It is *officially* stated by an officer of the University of Pennsylvania, under date of 26th of October, 1859, that the first *rule* among the requirements for graduation in the University is as follows: "The candidate must have attained the age of twenty-one years, have applied himself to the study of medicine for three years, and been, during that time, the private pupil, for two years at least, of a respectable practitioner of medicine," "and that the interpretation given by the faculty to the latter portion of this rule is, that those persons only can be recognized as 'preceptors' who are practitioners of medicine in the regular way as taught in the established schools of the country, and excludes those who are engaged in practicing homœopathy."

A homœopathist is, by the University of Pennsylvania, declared not to be a respectable practitioner of medicine. The people say otherwise; and we evidently find the University of Pennsylvania in open revolt, unhesitatingly treating with contempt the will of the people, and in violation of all law and order. Who is a respectable practitioner of medicine? This is the question, and, as far as the first part of the answer goes, viz., "*those persons can only be recognized as 'preceptors' who are practitioners of medicine in the regular way as taught in the established schools of the country,*" we are quite agreed to accept it; but when we are informed that *therefore*, "*this excludes those who are engaged in the practice of homœopathy,*" we hereby protest against such revolutionary logic.

We come now to ask the ultimate question, "What are the established schools of the country?" Of course *all* and every

school chartered by the people to teach medicine and confer the degree of doctor of medicine on all such candidates as have complied with the conditions laid down in the charter; and all these charters, from that of the time-honored University down to that of the eclectic school in Pine Street, contain the same conditions under which the degree as doctor of medicine may be conferred on an individual. The person in possession of such a document becomes, to all intents and purposes of the law, a practitioner of medicine in the regular way, and must surely be considered a respectable practitioner of medicine. The University of Pennsylvania had come to a different conclusion, applying a logic which is not easily understood.

Submitting to this conclusion at which the University of Pennsylvania arrived, it became a necessity to apply to the legislatures for charters of medical colleges and hospitals, so that such persons as were anxious to obtain a knowledge of the progressive homœopathic healing art, which they could not obtain in the old-established medical schools, could do so; and after having acquired that knowledge, they could also obtain a degree as doctor of medicine, which, under the peculiar ruling of the old-established medical schools, was refused to such persons as had for a preceptor a homœopathist. A peculiar ruling indeed.

There is really in existence, in even this free country, a set of men calling themselves "*regulars*," who refuse to acknowledge any medical man to be a respectable practitioner who not only knows everything appertaining to the knowledge of medicine, even if he holds a diploma as a doctor of medicine from their old-established schools, *if* this person has a knowledge of the progressive homœopathic healing art, and *if* this knowledge and a subsequent scientific investigation have convinced him of its superiority over all known systems in medicine, and *if* so convinced he cures people and thereby—by the better curing of them—becomes a successful rival. Which, then, is an exclusive school? Why, the school represented by Dr. Pepper, who has, by his address, not only grossly insulted and misrepresented successful rivals, but has also grossly insulted the multitude of highly intelligent people who have become disgusted with the pernicious common practice of physic, and have adopted the benign system of the healing art founded by Samuel Hahnemann.

